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GRADUATE SCHOOL

Thesis

THE PRESENT-DAY ATTITUDES OF COLLEGE STUDENTS TOWARD CHRISTIANITY

Submitted by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

The college students of one generation are continually being compared with those of previous generations. Youth is always interesting to older people, and especially is this true today because it is difficult for the older generation to understand the actions of the present-day youth. This failure of the older generation to understand the actions of the present generation, is not a new situation, apparently, for on an old cuneiform of 2500 B.C. recently discovered, were found these words: "Times are certainly bad. Children no longer obey their parents. Apparently the end of the world approaching".[1]

Today there are criticisms on every hand. The complaints in many instances are not fair, being based on insufficient evidence, and conclusions about all young people drawn from the behavior of a few. The "revolt of youth" presents a striking phenomena of this day, not limited to one country or one age. It is not the kind of revolt that speaks of license, but of progress and increased happiness.

In a sense, the younger generation is always in revolt against old ideas and customs. Great possibilities of progress lie in the hands of the daring few of each generation who have been trained to think for themselves and continue to do so.

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1 - Editorial, World Call, May 1928, p. 5.

There are apparent differences in dress, in manners and in speech today, but the revolt strikes much deeper than against these outward forms, striking the fundamental values of life upon which modern civilization is based. It may be called a radical revolt in this respect of dealing with the root of problems rather than the surface manifestations.

Some of the younger generation are protesting against the organizations of religion as they see them today and with the church's attitude toward the problems of the day. Others are in revolt against religion itself, for to many of them it is an outgrown superstition that should be discarded.

Against designating the present generation as 'flaming youth' many well-known educators rise in protest. Henry F. Osborn, in his address as Honorary Chancellor to Union College, said: "I take no part in depreciation of American youth because in my long experience I have found youth keenly responsive to what may be called the inspiration of the subject, eager to learn and to observe when shown how to observe, sensitive to beauty and truth, although very deficient in power of expression..... It is not our youth which is at fault, but our maturity."[2]

Alfred E. Stearns, from Brown College, said: "Nothing is further from the truth than to say youth is irreligious. Dogmas, creeds and forms are meaningless to youth, and formal religion repels, but there is a distinct difference between an

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2 - School and Society, The Championship of Youth, by Henry F. Osborn, July 28, 1928, p. 89.

active religious interest and being still at heart religious."[3] This opinion of Mr. Stearns is shared by George W. Wickersham, writing in The Churchman. He believes that the youth of today are more ' religious minded' but less 'church minded' than in earlier generations. They are ready to accept Christianity as a way of life but "conventions and creeds of a conventional ecclesiasticism have been tried and found wanting."[4]

Mr. John Gavit, a layman, made an investigation of thirty American colleges, living in each college from a few days to five weeks. He says that the two questions most frequently asked him about the young people in our American colleges is: "Are they irreligious" and "Are they turning to radicalism"? His answer is emphatically 'No'.

Purpose of Study.

In view of these varying opinions, it is the purpose of this study to determine first what we mean by "the religious attitude" and then what the students themselves are thinking and saying about their religion, with their evaluation of present religious agencies.

Limits.

Our study will be limited exclusively to a consideration of the attitudes of the college students of America. Brief mention may be made here, however, of a statement made by Mr. Gavit. He writes: "Of the present generation in America may be said very much what Henri Hertz said recently of the young people of France: 'It is a significant fact that it is not, or at least it is only rarely in theoretical discussions

3 - Stearns, Alfred E., The Challenge of Youth, W.A.Wilde Co., New York, 1923, p. 68.
4 - Wickersham, George W., The Episcopal Church and the Youth of Today, The Churchman, Feb. 9, 1929, p. 22.

or inquiries that the temperament of this young generation is displayed....Our youth is weary of debate on the grand scale and considers professions of faith profitless. They see and have seen too much of the discrepancy between prophecy and realization!."[5]

In an article called "Russian Youth and Religion" we read that the youth of that country has ceased to be indifferent, and while the number of avowed atheists is increased, the deep convictions of believing Christians are strengthened. The first conference of Russian and English youth to discuss church unity was held in January, 1927.[6]

Two thousand young people met at the Quadrennial Conference of the Student Christian Movement of Great Britain held in Liverpool in 1928. "The purpose of God" and "The glory of friendship" were the main topics, and their first concern was for the character of the message and the messenger.[7]

A detailed study of the youth of each country would reveal similar evidences of unrest and revolt on the part of a few students.

Procedure:

The attitude of college students toward religion has been investigated in a few colleges, and the results of several of these studies are available for our consideration. There are a few basic convictions at work in the development of this movement toward research. One is that college students face a life situation in which religious experience is put to severe and subtle strains. Another reason is that

5 - Gavit, John P., College, Harcourt, Brace and Company, N.Y., 1925, p. 246.
6 - Editorial, World Call, May, 1928, p. 4.
7 - Editorial, Christian Century, Jan.1929.

future leaders will come from the ranks of college students and it is important that the leaders acquire constructive views and achieve a creative intelligence to religious interests. A third reason may be that it is valuable for science to secure an understanding of all phases of man's experience, including religion.[8]

The questionnaire has been used in securing the information in most of the investigations. In the study made at Reed College, Portland, Oregon, personal interviews supplemented the questionnaire. The most recent study of the colleges, reported in the book Undergraduates was written after the compilers had personally visited twenty-three colleges, interviewing students and faculty.

Several books have been written by older people about college students, and their opinions of what students are thinking will be compared with what the students themselves are thinking and saying, as expressed in their conferences and in their writings. There have been several significant conferences on religion held within the last few years. The speeches and discussions from these conferences will be used as indicative of what one part of the student group is saying about Christianity.

We shall consider first, then, what we mean by the religious attitude and by religion, and the changing conceptions of religion today from the older ideas of it.

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8 - Bickham, H. M., Techniques for Studying College Students, Religious Education Magazine, March 1928, p. 220.

CHAPTER II

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS OF STUDENTS

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Meaning of Religion:

> "The problem of religion--that is, of the relations of man with the supernatural, with God and immortality, with the soul, our personality or the ego, and its existence or non-existence after death--is the greatest and deepest which ever confronted mankind." [1]

These words from one considered the most materialistic of scientists show the significance of an effort to find out what we mean by religion.

Old idea of religion.

Considering first the ideas of what religion was several generations ago, we find that it was considered largely as a matter of conformity to traditional forms. The Bible was a revered and familiar sacred book. There was a definite faith in God, and an assurance of what was right and what was wrong. There was religious sanction for morality. In each church, there were definite dogmas and creeds, belief in which were necessary for salvation.

Those who still believe that religion is an outward conformity to theological doctrines, customary rituals and traditional moral codes are convinced that there is something radically wrong with the religion of college students today.

New conception of religion.

But the religious approach of one generation may be different from that of a preceding one, and today we

1 - Steinmetz, Charles P., Science and Religion, Harper's, February 1922.

are not primarily concerned with the formal creed and the church, but with the inner experience. Many young people today know that religion itself is real, although orthodox religion has mainly concerned itself with creeds. We cannot be rid of the experiental fact of religion, phrased in different terms as it may be from generation to generation.

Religious attitude.

In answer to the question, What is an Attitude? let us compare it first with other possible attitudes. There are three possible attitudes that may be taken in the presence of mystery: (1) that of absolute collapse, which means defeat; (2) the attitude of common sense and science, of withdrawal for a time to get a new explanation which will meet the situation; and (3) the religious attitude, which after a similar withdrawal and consideration of facts, enables one to act with confidence without completely solving the mystery.[1]

Another good explanation is that given by Mr. E. J. Chave of the University of Chicago:

> "We regard an attitude as a complex, a complex of feelings, desires, fears, convictions, prejudices or other tendencies that have given a set or readiness to act to a person because of varied experiences. In religious education, the concern is for the development of attitudes toward God, toward prayer, toward the total meaning and worth of life, toward the ordinary tasks and responsibilities of life."[2]

Influence of Psychology.

The psychology of religion is a comparatively new subject, as such, and "its first and most far

1 - Horton, W.M., Defining the Religious Attitude, The Journal of Religion, Jan. 1929, p. 143.
2 - Chave, E.J., Attitudes, Religious Education, April, 1928, p.315.

reaching effect upon the concept of religion has been to free it from all supernaturalistic connotations, and it has sharpened the distinction between religion and theology."[1]

It has long been usual to speak of "the religious instinct", but now it is generally agreed that religion is not an instinct, nor even a sentiment based upon a group of instincts.

E. T. Clarke says that

> "modern psychology finds no natural depravity or so-called 'religious instinct', but rather a native equipment of 'instincts' or 'drives', reflexes and capacities which possess no inherent moral qualities but which are capable of development in any direction, according to stimuli presented by environment. It finds a capacity for religion, which, in view of both nature and environment, is more than a passive possibility."[2]

What Religion is.

Present-day writers on psychology of religion are in substantial agreement in regarding religion as a vital, necessary, human function which a man can and must continue to exercise, no matter what radical changes may take place in his attitude toward life. The younger generation is interested in religion, and there is increasing wonder as to what, after all, religion is. We are dealing with it more and more in psychological terms.

> "Religion cannot be essentially described in terms of its temporary clothes, its churches and its creeds. Religion at its fountain-head is an individual, psychological experience."[3]

Professor Weiman defines religion thus:

1 - Morton, Walter H., Changesin the Concept of Religion Necessitated by Psychology, Religious Education, January 1928,p.28.
2 - Clark, E.T., Psychology of Religious Awakening, Macmillan Co., New York, 1929, p. 93.
3 - Fosdick, Harry Emerson, What Is Religion? Harper's, March,1929, p. 424.

"Religion is man's endeavor to find that adjustment to God which will yield the most abundant life. God is precisely that object, whatsoever its nature may be, which will yield maximum security and abundance to all human living when right adjustment is made." [1]

Religious Experience of College Students.

In Mr. Clark's new book, "The Psychology of Religious Awakening", he defines religion as "an individual conscious attitude toward and relationship with God." [2] This book is the result of the study he made of 2174 college students, located in sixty schools, state and denominational, and in two summer assemblies. It is concerned only with the experiences of individuals who claim to be religious persons. In contrast to the old idea of the absolute necessity for salvation of a conversion'experience', these students recognize conversion, in the old sense, as only one door, and an exceptional one to the religious life.

Three Types of religious awakening.

Three types of religious awakening are recognized: 1. Definite Crisis Awakening which only 6.7% had experienced; 2. The Emotional Stimulus Awakening of 27.2%, and 3. The Gradual Awakening by which 66.1% arrived at their religious consciousness. Among the persons forty years of age, the Definite Crisis cases were 35.8% as against 6.7% for the total group, showing that a decrease in such experiences has occurred in recent years. Religion for the younger generation does not come "all at once" but rather as a gradual development and therefore demands previous educational processes. It was found from this investigation

1 - Weiman, W.A.,Religious Experience and Scientific Method,

2 - Clark, E.T., Psychology ofReligious Awakening, p. 93

that 'stern theology' influences religious experience by inducing the Definite Crisis type of awakening, and as stern theology is disappearing, we may conclude that the Definite Crisis Awakenings will decrease.

The youth of the country are eager for freedom, and are breaking through the shell of the past in order to live a larger life. In getting away from the institutional religion and coming to the religion of right living, they are more interested in the vital faith expressed in common conduct and experience than in the forms and creeds. The religion of many students today is centered in the personality of Jesus. They will not be confused by the conflicts of old orthodoxy and accept Jesus, rather than the Bible as their authority.

There has been unrivalled activity in religion, due to literary criticism, a study of comparative religions and the philosophy and psychology of religion. "Religion has been taken from the clouds and revealed for what it is--the living experience of living men as they face ultimate mysteries."[1]

One college student writes:

> "In my mind, religious experience means the process whereby one keeps the inner source of spiritual power fresh and strong and true to the spirit of Jesus."[2]

A college man defines conversion as:

> "...the awakening in the soul of a man to the existence of God, and the relating of self, in accordance with this awakening to the world and to a future life that is worth striving for."[3]

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1 - Brown, Wm.A., New Signs in Religion, Yale Review, vol.xvii. October, 1927, p. 119.
2 - What Religious Experience Means to a College Senior, by a College Woman, Religious Education, Feb. 1925, p. 17.
3 - Ibid, by a college man, p. 16.

Religion is in a process of evolution today, as other things are, and the challenge to the young people is to discriminate between the old and the new, to translate the religious impulse and aspirations within them into terms that are consistent with all other knowledge they have today, and to preserve for the future the eternal values of religion. The danger of youth's revolt is that in their desire for freedom, for expression, they may fail to discriminate between the true and the false, and so lose the real values in religion. There is always the conflict in life between the higher and lower self. Intelligence is needed in this search for the highest ideals, and then faith to strive constantly for their realization.

Finally, then, for the student generation, religion is not synonymous with church membership, but rather for them it means a reverencing of the highest in one's own life and in the lives of all others in society.

Findings from Recent Surveys of College Students.

In an age when the importance of scientific research is being stressed, it is natural that there should be research in the religious field, and several recent investigations of the religious attitudes of college students are available for our use. A comparison of the general results will be indicative of the trend of student thinking, for in all the studies mentioned, a cross-section of the student group was taken, and the surveys were made in colleges in different sections of the country.

Source of surveys:

1. Evanston Survey:

On the Evanston campus, a questionnaire was filled out by 1600 students, 748 men and 901 women, selected at random from all colleges and classes.[1]

2. University of Washington:

A much smaller group was studied at the University of Washington, where 200 students in a Sociology class were asked to fill out a questionnaire. A copy of this questionnaire is given, with the results, for it is illustrative of the type of questions asked in many of the surveys, and in most points, the results are corroborated by the other investigations.[2] (See questionnaire on following page.)

3. Reed College, Portland, Oregon:

A small group of 33 seniors at Reed College, Portland, Oregon, were interviewed in order to obtain their religious beliefs. This group is considered in order to compare the results from the questionnaire method and the personal interview.[3]

4. Undergraduates:

The results of the most recent study of college life has been published in a book called "Undergraduates". Twenty-three institutions, "scattered in fifteen states from Kansas to New Hampshire, afforded an opportunity to study state and privately controlled foundations,

1 - Betts, George H., Religious Attitudes and Activities of University Students: A Report, Religious Education, Nov.1927.
2 - Bain, Reed, Religious Attitudes of College Students, American Journal of Sociology, vol. 32, p. 762.
3 - Griffin, Helen C., Changes In The Religious Attitudes of College Students, Religious Education, February,1928,p.159.

TABLE I

Religious Attitudes of 200 College Students
(78 Male, 122 Female)

University of Washington

Questions	All		Female		Male		Sr.Men	
	No.	Yes**	No.	Yes**	No.	Yes**	No.	Yes**
(1)	(2)*	(3)	(4)*	(5)	(6)*	(7)	(8)*	(9)
1. Is God a Person?	192	15.1	115	15.7	63	15.9	16	7.1
2. Is God an impersonal force?	182	67.6	106	62.3	61	67.2	16	66.6
3. Does God interfere in the world?	192	42.2	113	44.2	60	38.3	16	37.5
4. Was Jesus Very God?	192	34.4	110	41.8	68	30.9	16	37.5
5. Was Jesus a manifestation of God?	190	62.6	110	62.7	63	57.1	16	50.0
6. Was Jesus human only?	194	35.6	111	35.1	68	38.2	16	62.5
7. Was Jesus born of a virgin?	187	66.8	109	68.8	64	67.2	16	66.6
8. Was the Bible verbally inspired by God?	192	18.7	113	27.4	63	6.4	16	6.6
9. Is the Bible a general inpiration from God?	190	69.5	113	69.9	66	66.7	16	53.3
10. Is the Bible a historical account?	196	85.7	115	84.3	66	83.3	16	91.7
11. Is the Bible a mythological account?	197	62.9	112	62.5	68	57.4	16	72.8
12. Do you believe in the resurrection of the body?	184	32.0	108	35.2	60	31.7	16	28.5
13. Do you believe in the eternal life of the spirit?	187	76.5	102	81.4	65	64.6	16	66.6
14. Do you believe that personality persist after death?	178	30.3	104	28.8	61	34.4	16	53.8
15. Do you believe in reward and punishment after death?	188	40.4	103	45.6	55	49.1	16	35.7
16. Do you favor laws compelling Sunday observance?	198	27.3	115	32.2	69	15.9	16	25.0

* - Columns 2,4,6,8 contain the total number answering each question.
** - Indicates percentages.

Taken from Journal of Sociology, vol. 32, p. 763.

coeducational and non-coeducational institutions, rural and urban locations, and small, large and medium size student bodies. All were visited between January and October, 1924, and half of them were afterwards revisited by one or more of the inquirers."[1] Interviews were arranged for with persons who were likely to be best informed regarding the subject in question. In the section we are most interested in, on Religious Practices and Beliefs, a questionnaire from 674 seniors regarding changes in their attitudes, habits and beliefs since coming to college was used to supplement the interviews.

5. Church Advertising Department.

The Church Advertising Department of the International Advertising Association sent a questionnaire to one hundred widely distributed colleges, and replies were thus received from several thousand undergraduates. The same questions had been submitted to the public through a newspaper poll. The results from this one test showed that there is not such a wide divergence between the beliefs of the older and younger generations, as is sometimes supposed.[2]

Religious Beliefs of Students.

We shall consider now the general trend of student thinking in regard to some of the fundamental questions of religion, as revealed by these questionnaires.

1. Belief in God.

That students lose their belief in God

1 - Edwards, Artman, Fisher, Undergraduates, Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., New York, 1928, Introduction, p. ix.
2 - Youth Gives Lie to Gossip, Literary Digest, April 30,1927.

during college years is a cry often heard. The result of all of the investigations prove the contrary, however.

In the Reed College investigation, the largest group conceived of God as a "being who purposes or strives for some end". God is defined as "a spiritual force among other forces in the world, using matter as a medium or form of activity".[1] A second group would not attribute purpose to God, but conceived of Him as a force. To a third group, God means "the reign of law" and they feel that no supernatural power aids or controls man. A few students held pantheistic ideas, while four of the group considered, denied the existence of a supreme being of any sort, saying "All religions are wild shots into infinity".

The Washington investigation shows that 67.6% considered God an impersonal force and 15.1% considered Him as a Person.

In the Church Advertising questionnaire, 98% of the students said they believed in God. The Undergraduate investigation shows similar facts of belief, for they found that the number "avowing disbelief or definite skepticism was noticeably small, being one per cent of the men and one per cent ofthe women."[2]

2. Concept of God.

The concept of God changes decidedly during college days. The majority of students come to college with only vague ideas of God, many of them holding their childish

1 - Religious Education, February 1928, p. 160
2 - Undergraduates, p. 244

conceptions of an anthropomorphic God. There are three lines of growth evident: gradual development from childhood beliefs without serious doubts and violent reactions; an entire reconstruction after serious doubts and difficulties; and a process of reconstruction still going on.[1] For the majority, the growth is gradual. The more important changes in the conception of God are from the idea of God as a human being to a non-personal being, from a judge to a God of love, and from a human to a spiritual being. The experiences accompanying these changes show definite lines of growth, generally from the unreal and unsatisfactory to the abiding and satisfying. The change from fear to love, from moral obligation to freedom, and from passive acceptance to cooperation are some of the changes experienced.[2]

The experiences of all students do not agree with these, however, as some of the quotations from Undergraduates will indicate:

> "When I came to college God meant something I feared or prayed to when in trouble. Now I am not sure of the nature of God. Sometimes I doubt that He exists. I am, however, trying to keep my mind open to conviction."

> "Formerly a great loving spirit, personally interested in each of his children, and very close to one's heart, guiding and comforting. Now an abstraction, impersonal, unheeding, "the principle of the conservation of value." For three years I was distinctly religious after coming to college, believing in prayer, communion, etc., until within a few weeks the study of The Philosophy of Religion by Hoffding and some other reading, robbed my religion of all the usual significance of the term.[3]

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1 - Searles, Herbert L., An Empirical Inquiry Into the God Experience of College Students, Religious Education, August 1926, p. 334.
2 - Ibid, p. 337.
3 - Undergraduates, p. 246.

3. Belief in Bible.

The student generation today holds very different views of the Bible than the old orthodox views of literal interpretation and inspiration. In answer to the question,"Do you believe the Bible inspired in the sense that no other literature could be said to be inspired?" 82% answered "yes".[1] The Reed College finding, that the Bible is thought of in terms of historical and literary criticism, is corroborated by the statements from the other studies.

The large majority of students seem to believe that the Bible presents a good working code of ethics, a beautiful piece of literature, and a history of significance, though not entirely authentic. The study of science greatly influenced the revision of their ideas as to the literal truth of the Bible, but it is nevertheless considered the foundation-stone of practical religion.

Very, very few students were found who read the Bible with any degree of regularity. For most of them, it is a closed book, only looked at occasionally through curiosity. The Undergraduate study is the only one which gives definite figures on this point, so we cannot check their figures with other studies. They found that 7% of the students questioned read the Bible regularly, 39% of the men and 47% of the women read it occasionally, and the others read it seldom or never.[2]

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1 - Church Advertising Questionnaire, Literary Digest, April 30, 1927.
2 - Undergraduates, p. 244.

4. Prayer.

The answers to the questions about prayer seem to indicate that students today believe in it mainly because of its psychological effect on the individual. "Prayer has certain natural effects, but has no relationship to any idea of God" is the attitude of one group at Reed. Another group believes that "prayer affords an outlet for the emotions and crystallizes the desires".[1] The main reason given for the changed attitude toward prayer was that because of the experience with ineffectual prayer, the supernatural ideas of the power of prayer were discarded.

A fourth of the women and one-seventh of the men in the Undergraduate study ranked prayer as "the most important source of help in living a good life". In the Church Advertising study, 90% said they believed in prayer as a means of personal relationship with God. Prayer is probably more common than either Bible reading or a belief in creeds. There seems to be evidences of a reviving interest in prayer as a means of spiritual renewal. Many books are being written dealing with the subject, and groups are discussing the meaning of prayer in an attempt to find its value.

5. Belief in Jesus.

In all the investigations, there is marked agreement in the place given Jesus. The Church Advertising study asked the question: " Do you believe that Jesus was divine as no other man was divine?" to which 89% answered "yes".

1 - Religious Education, February 1928, p. 161.

Large majorities of both men and women in the Undergraduate study considered that the life of Jesus set the ethical standard for modern life, while in the Washington questionnaire, 62.6% considered Jesus as a manifestation of God, and 35.6% thought Jesus was human only.

There has come a new human appreciation of Jesus from good courses on His life and teachings, and the desire to get back of all traditions and beliefs about Him is evidenced in such a statement as the following: "Jesus is not as great a factor in modern life as He should be. He has been obscured by religious organizations."[1]

6. Church Attendance.

"The young people are deserting the churches." "To the college student of today, the church is far away." To what extent are these statements true? There have been many articles written dealing with this subject, in addition to the surveys mentioned previously.

Percentages attending church:

The Evanston survey gives special emphasis to this problem. It was found in that study that 75% of the number studied claimed membership in some church. The question about church attendance showed that 33% attended regularly, 22% attended frequently, 15% seldom went, and 9% never attended while in the university.

In a survey of students at Whitman College,

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1 - Undergraduates, p. 304.

Walla Walla, Washington, it was found that 73% of the students were church members. A recent census from Wellesley College indicated that 76% of its student body belonged to churches.[1] 47% of Whitman's students attended church regularly, 32% attended irregularly, 15% seldom went, and 6% never attended.

The Undergraduate study showed about the same percentages attending church regularly, 44% for the men and 55% for the women.[2] These percentages are much higher than those from Ann Arbor, Michigan, where an investigation of 562 students, showed that 19% of the men and 37% of the women attended church regularly, 65% of the men and 60% of the women attended occasionally, and 16% of the men and 4% of the women never attended.[3]

Reasons for church attendance:

The students at Walla Walla gave "Worship, inspiration and development of spiritual life" as the main reason for church attendance, with "influence of parents" and "music" other reasons. That the influence of parents has more effect than the influence of the minister is the opinion of this student group. A comparison of the church attendance of college students with that of the townspeople indicated that the students attended much more regularly than the townspeople.[4]

The reasons given by Evanston students for not attending church were because they were "too busy", "the church was not helpful", and "they were not interested in reli-

1 - Ells, Walter C., Why Do College Students Go To Church? Religious Education, August 1926, p. 342
2 - Undergraduates, p. 304
3 - Ibid
4 - Religious Education, p. 343

gion."

Effect of University life on religious attitudes.

We have been considering the statement of students about certain phases of their religious beliefs. The next question tobe considered is what influences have had most effect in changing their opinions, and what the total results of these influences through four years of college have been.

Influences effecting beliefs:

13% of the Evanston students said that the courses they had taken had injured them religiously,while 35% said they had helped. It was found there that the campus organizations have considerably less effect on the religious point of view than the courses taken.

In the Undergraduate study, scientific courses as now taught headed the list of obstacles to religious belief, (27%) but science and religion were considered complimentary rather than antagonistic by 78% of the men and 85% of the women. Belief in evolution was expressed by large majorities of both men and women.[1]

The Reed College students found great help from their courses in History and Literature, and the science courses helped them to replace their old orthodox ideas with the newer viewpoints of scholars. The personal contacts with the professors have great influence, usually for the good.

In answer to the question "Is the change in your religious attitude a loss or gain in your life as a whole?"

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1 - Undergraduates, p. 247

the general view expressed was that the change in belief about immortality detracted from the richness and value of life, while they considered learning the truth about a thing always a gain. In contrast to the general belief that higher education destroys beliefs, these students at Reed believed that college contributed materially to the construction of a deeper and truer point of view.[1]

There are several discoveries of major importance that may come during college years, and these years should be a time of transition, of growth in religion rather than of collapse as they sometimes appear to be. For many, it is the first time that they come to realize that religion has been of concern to the greatest minds of all times, for no one can think deeply without thinking religiously.

They come into a new realization of the real meaning of religion, and their thought of religion broadens. For many, it is during this time that they realize their own need of religion, through disappointments or inadequacies, but it is probably better if religion is thought of as the most adequate answer and explanation of the universe.

"Loss of faith" is spoken of as a common experience of college students, and especially of those majoring in science. This is not alone the experience of college students, but of all young people, as Dr. Brown, Chancellor of New York University, points out. He says:

> "The later teens and early twenties are a time of tension and of readjustment in the religious habitude of young men everywhere, whether they be collegians or clerks or sailors before the mast." [2]

1 - Religious Education, February 1928, p. 160.
2 - Gavit, John P., College, p. 257.

If the student has brought with him to college as his religion only a set of memorized creeds or a collection of sentimental associations which are not his own, but have been accepted without questioning, it is entirely possible that under the stimulus of good teaching and honest questioning, these half-thought out beliefs will be lost. A real religion usually gain strength and permanence during the college years, and the number who 'lose their religion' during college days is greatly overbalanced by the number who experience a deepening religious consciousness.

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CHAPTER III

INFLUENCES EFFECTING PRESENT ATTITUDES

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INFLUENCES EFFECTING PRESENT ATTITUDES.

The question"why" inevitably follows such varying statements of belief as we have outlined in the preceding chapter. " What accounts for this 'revolt of youth'?", "why are their beliefs so different from those of the preceding generations?", are questions we shall attempt to answer in this chapter.

To anyone who has been watching the religious tendencies for many years past, the present situation among young people, either in or out of college, is not surprising. The war had little to do with the problem, except as it disclosed the results of conditions which have been making in America for several generations. To understand what is happening now, we must go back to the middle of the nineteenth century when the industrial revolution began to break up the old social and industrial system and relationships, and to the time when the scientific discoveries began to shake confidence in the long-accepted Bible truths.

I Home Conditions:

The immediate cause of the change in religious beliefs is to be found in the home training of the present younger generation. Whether parents consciously teach religion or not, the child is influenced by his home atmosphere, either for good or bad, and the home conditions are responsible for many of the present attitudes.

Conditions of the nineteenth century.

During the middle and latter part of the 19th century, there was no problem of 'unbelief' in the colleges, for they were under the control of theologians whose orthodox beliefs were made sure of. The study of science had not yet been put in the colleges of liberal arts, and scientific schools were looked down upon from the scholastic viewpoint. There were a few venturesome young people, however, who had sensed the scientific battle, and were beginning to ask questions about the infallibility of the scriptures, and the origin of the world. The parents of the young people now in college grew up in homes where it was customary for all the family to go to Sunday School and to Church regularly. The Bible was read in the home and regarded as the book of books. "Saying of grace", "the family altar" and "family prayers" were established customs. Sunday was observed most carefully as a day of rest. "In the twilight and dusk of that general tradition grew up the parents of the present Younger Generation."[1] The words 'twilight' and 'dusk' are used because already there were some who were doubting and only going through the forms. The great masses of people in the cities, especially, were beginning to give up the traditions, even then.

Social life:

The social life of this period was centered in the church, especially in the rural communities and towns. Families were widely separated and communication was difficult. The whole family participated in church socials and entertainments, and this was the only social life outside of the home.

1 - Gavit, John Palmer, College, p. 240.

With the members of the family dependent upon themselves and each other for their pleasures, there was more working together, and a sense of family loyalty developed.

Economic situation:

During the latter part of the 19th century, there was great shifting of the population from the country to the cities, with all the attendant adjustments. There were many inventions perfected that brought people together, such as the telegraph in 1844, the cable in 1866, the telephone in 1876, the linotype in 1884, and a successful automobile in 1890. In 1896, there were four automobiles manufactured, but by 1900, there were 4,800, the growth being rapid from then on.[1]

With the growing materialism, there came increasing demands for more social life and different kinds of amusements. The craze for entertainment was in part due, no doubt, to the reaction from the growing intensity and competition in business and the seeking of wealth for its own sake and as a means of more entertainment.

Living conditions.

In the shift of the population from the country to the cities, it was inevitable that the separate home for each family would disappear. In its place, families were crowded together in flats and hotels. In these surroundings, the house work was greatly simplified and no longer was there sharing of responsibility in the home. Loss of interest in

1 - Rugg, Harold, Mechanical Conquest of America, Teachers College, New York, 1922, p. 134.

the home followed lack of responsibility, and soon all pleasure and enjoyment were sought for outside of the home. City life tended to make people sophisticated and it destroyed the sense of responsibility to public opinion and standards.

Present conditions contrasted.

Modern Social life.

What are some of the modern substitutes for the old home and church entertainments which the younger generation has grown up with?

The most wide-spread, if not the most powerful influence is the moving picture. Many of the films are highly exciting and tend to stimulate the adolescent's sex impulses. There are many pictures of unnatural relations and extravagances in human action.

The best sellers among the novels are those which deal with the sex question. Magazines that have 'snappy' stories are sold to large numbers. The impressions gained from reading are generally lasting and often determine future actions, unconsciously, it may seem.

The American press is a great enemy of education, in one way, because it gives a distorted perspective of current life, giving more space to murders and crime than to constructive achievements.[1]

Many other forms of social life are enjoyed, such as dancing, card playing, and sports of all kinds. There is very little social life centered in the home, however, and

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1 - Osborn, Henry F., The Championship of Youth, School and Society, July 28, 1928, p. 90

the benefits of the family working out their pleasures together are gone.

Parental authority:

With all these economic and social changes, came the lessening of parental responsibility and authority. Many parents of today have either not tried or have not known how to make much more than a hotel for their children. Some have given over the entire care of their children to nurses and servants, so they may be free to follow their own desires.

> "The failure of American parents to take a serious attitude in their children's mental growth tends to give the young a wrong attitude toward the vital things of life." 1

Their devotion to the material things of life, to that which is immediately 'practical' has led them to forget the truly vital aspects. The children, during their impressionistic years, have had no religious or moral training in the home, and accept their parent's indifferent attitude toward religion. True, many parents are still vitally interested in the church, but many more have lost their former devotion to religious forms and the children sense their doubts.

It is not the Younger Generation, about whose morality and religion we are so concerned, then, who have abandoned what was implied in the institution of the 'family altar', the upholding of ideals, and the belief in the infallibility of the Bible.

> "They are the legitimate product of the homes and social environment out of which they came. The cynically materialistic, unbelieving generation is not that of these youngsters, but of the middle-aged men and women of this day, who now complain of the fruits

1 - Angell, Robert Cooley, The Campus, p. 13.

> of their own ignorance, selfishness and negligence. It is they who have eaten the sour grapes, and they have no right to be surprised if their children's teeth are set on edge!" [1]

II Effect of War:

With the background we have given of the social and economic conditions, we may now consider the effect of the war upon the present college students.

Time of excitement:

For five years, we were accustomed to read of the daily destruction of thousands of lives, of great battles and submarine attacks. Life was in an uproar, and it is no wonder that the former interesting things seemed tame and quiet in comparison. The orderly habits and customs were forgotten, and the proprieties and restrictions imposed by society were swept away. Where there were no standards from home training, or inner self-control, people went to pieces morally and mentally.

Influence on present college students at the time.

The present college students were from seven to seventeen years of age during the war, at a most impressionable period of their life. During the time when normally ideas, points of view and standards are being impressed upon children, they lived in this unnatural and exciting atmosphere, with nothing in their experience to tell them that it was not natural. The parents could not enforce old proprieties for they themselves were not observing them.

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1 - Gavitt, John Palmer, College, p. 242.

When the war was over, parental authority could not be exercised, for the children had always had their liberty, and did not know the meaning of authority. They are now in the world the older generation made for them, and the thoughtful young people are trying to find their place in it. The chaos following the war has set them thinking a bit, perhaps, and for some, it is carrying them from the material back to the realms of the spiritual.

III Growth of the Scientific Spirit.

Another great influence in changing the religious beliefs of students has been the growth of the scientific or critical attitude.

Meaning of scientific attitude.

The scientific method has been well described by Karl Pearson as follows:

> "The classification of facts, the recognition of their sequence and relative significance is the function of science, and the habit of forming a judgment upon these facts, unbiased by personal feeling, is characteristic of what may be termed the scientific frame of mind."[1]

This statement is made from the standpoint of the natural sciences, and we see what far-reaching effects this attitude would have when applied to religion. The doctrine of evolution began to be questioned, and strengthened by archaelogical evidence, the literal infallibility of the Bible was undermined.

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1 - Pearson, Karl, Grammar of Science, Adam and Charles Black, London, 1900, p. 6.

Opposition of Church.

There was the feeling, justified in many cases, that the church was opposed to science, and was trying to stop its progress. This made an antagonistic feeling toward the church, and students were more inclined to follow the investigations of science than to blindly accept what the church asked them to believe.

> "Science has not superseded religion among college undergraduates, but our modern students have simply shifted their credulity."[1]

Effect of student's study of science:

Some students who specialize in science seem to lose their religious beliefs for a time. They lose their emotional spontaneity, as they begin to experiment and analyze facts, and then they are troubled with theological difficulties. They find it increasingly hard to pray, and usually stop, until they go far enough in their scientific studies to realize the meaning of true prayer. Science may close certain realms of religious experience to the student, but it opens new fields to him that are unkown to one not scientifically trained.

The professor of sciences can so teach his courses that they will strengthen the beliefs of his students, and the real science teachers show that there is no conflict between science and religion, as the pseudo-scientists would have their students believe, throwing religion into the discard.

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1 - Sperry, Willard, The Religion of College Men, Outlook, March 21, 1928, p. 455.

> "Neither materialistic science nor other-worldly religion appeals to these young people, nor any purely intellectual philosophy or economics.... No religion, no philosophy will arouse them which denies, or fails to take account of all the facts of existence that they are learning and which does not somehow unify into one harmonious significance all truth--physical, social, psychological, spiritual--and correlate it with life, Life Eternal."[1]

IV Changing Conceptions of Education:

Another important influence in shaping the beliefs and attitudes of college students has been the whole educational system in which they have received their instruction. We need only to trace the history of our leading colleges to see how far their present purpose varies from the one for which they were founded.

~~Purpose~~ for which colleges founded:

Practically all of the endowed colleges were founded under religious auspices. Most of the older ones, at least, were established to provide training so that there might be an educated ministry. In a publication known as "New England's First Fruits" of 1643, we read the following:

> "One of the next things we longed for and looked after was to advance learning and perpetuate it to posterity, dreading to leave an illiterate Ministry to the churches when our present Ministers shall lie in the dust. And....it pleased God to stir up the heart of one Mr. Harvard to give the one half of his estate toward the erecting of a college."[2]

As a result of this gift, Harvard College was founded in 1636 for the stated purpose of giving the church

1 - Gavit, John Palmer, College, p. 264.
2 - Cubberley, Readings in the History of Education, Houghton Mifflin Company, N.Y., 1920, p. 290.

'an educated ministry'. In 1701, Yale was founded for a similar purpose. Princeton, Columbia (Kings), Pennsylvania, Brown, Rutgers (Queens), and Dartmouth were all founded during the Colonial Period with a distinctly religious purpose.

Laws regulating colleges:

The curriculum of the elementary schools was of a religious nature, based on Bible texts, creeds, the Ten Commandments and catechisms. In nine of the original thirteen colonies, laws were passed recognizing ecclesiastical control in education. These laws show the decidedly religious aim in education. The practice of appropriating state funds to the colleges under church control grew rapidly, but as the number of sects increased and greater demands were made on the public funds, dissatisfaction arose which finally resulted in the separation of the schools from sectarian control.[1]

> "From 1850 on, the movement toward the separation of state and sectarian education gained rapidly. The legislative and constitutional provisions of this period prohibited sectarian instruction, the establishment of religious tests, and the appropriation of public funds to schools under ecclesiastical control or not under the absolute control of the state....Between 1819 and 1880, twenty-six states had established state universities." [2]

What should be taught in colleges founded under the Morrill Act of 1862 was well defined:

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1 - Searles, Herbert L., The Study of Religion in State Universities, published by the University, Iowa City, Iowa, p.30 f

2 - Ibid, p. 32.

"...to the endowment, support and maintenance of at least one college where the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches oflearning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts...in order to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in the several pursuits and professions in life."[1]

As a result of the provisions of the Morrill Act, the universities trained leaders for mechanical, agricultural and commercial pursuits, with little attention to the philosophical and cultural subjects.

The increasing commercialism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was reflected in the educational system in the growth of vocational colleges, such as engineering, medicine, law and business administration. Many new subjects were added to the college curriculum, and the student was given more freedom in choosing his course of study.

Changes in Student Body:

Increase in college enrollment:

Between the years 1890 and 1900, the college enrollment doubled, and it had doubled again by 1917. In 1924, there were a half-million students in American colleges and universities.[2]

Type of student:

The majority of these thousands of students come from homes where there is little cultural background. Their parents have little intellectual interest,

1 - United States Bureau of Education Bulletin 47, 1915.
2 - Duffus, R.L., The Crisis in the AmericanColleges, New York Times Magazine, January 8, 1928.

and are satisfied with the status quo. They desire no change in the social order, so it is no wonder that the majority of the present student generation do not recognize the need for constructive thinking. There is little preparation of soul and mind before college, and the student gets his real life from activities, because the contacts are more like those he is accustomed to, and he falls in the line of least resistance.

Percy Marks writes in no uncertain terms concerning the mind of the present college student. He says:

> "The average American undergraduate has at best only a mediocre mind, a mind that requires an educational standard woefully low and one that inevitably forces on the colleges most of the faults with which they are admittedly encrusted." [1]

Activities:

The university, with its numerous activities, occupies the students whole mind while he is in school, and it is the one thing that really matters. In the tremendous stress of modern college life, the average student is too busy with work and play to think much about religion. Because of the desire to be in the activities of college life, with the consequent lack of time for other things, the typical student today is indifferent rather than atheistic or agnostic.[2]

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1 - Marks, Percy, Which Way Parnassus. Harcourt Brace and Company, New York, 1926, p. 14.
2 - The Religion of College Men, Editorial, Outlook, March 21, 1928, p. 455.

Function of College Training:

The shifting of the emphasis in colleges from cultural to vocational training, and the change in the type of students has raised the question as to just what the function of the university is today.

If university education is for the purpose of enabling its students to earn a better living, to be at home in their age, it is doing it well. But if its purpose is to develop the critical faculties of its students, to help them reach independent judgments and seek truth for its own sake, it is failing miserably.

In "The Religion of the Undergraduates", Mr. Cyril Harris says:

> "It is the function of universities in the modern state to give our rudderless world a creative intelligence, informed and alert and indignant, selfless and unafraid. It is the function of the Gospel to fire that intelligence with a passion for righteousness and a divine discontent."[1]

Judgment of students:

It is probably true that by far the greater number of students in colleges accept conditions as they are, but there are a few in each college who are questioning the present educational system. A Student Council held at Harvard in 1926 protested strongly against the present tendencies. They said that a student could learn everything in college he wanted to know except the

1 - Harris, Cyril, The Religion of the Undergraduate, Charles Scribner's Sons, New Yor, 1925, p. 66.

greatest thing, the art of living. They thought that knowledge should be restored to its primary philosophic function, so students could be aided in building up a constructive philosophy of their own.[1]

Why Education Does not Prepare Students for the Vocation of Living:

There are several reaons why college education at the present time does not prepare students for the vocation of living.

(1) The main one and the oldest is the still prevalent view that teaching is something done by the teacher to the student. This idea is beginning to be criticized, but thus far not much progress has been made in changing the old teaching methods. Students are not trained to make judgments while in school, and when they are out of college, they either conform to existing conditions or drift from one thing to another. Teaching should be understood to be first of all the stimulation of students to a critical examination of the values of our society.

(2) Another reason why college graduates are not trained in the art of living is due to the manner in which the necessity for specialization in teaching has been handled. Each department teaches its subject only, without reference to its contribution to life, its relation to all the other knowledge in the world, or to the business of living. The

1 -Aswell, Edward, The Students Prescribe, Forum, November 1926, p. 716.

lack of intellectual interest in college is easily accounted for by the fact that knowledge is not acquired and used for the improvement of living men and women.

> "There will be no solution for the problem now before us until functions to be performed, values for human living, criticism of purposes and of conduct in occupations, reach the student consciousness in immediate unity with his acquaintance with fact, process, and skill."[1]

(3) A third reason why colleges do not train their students to be critical-minded, is because of their financial dependence on the good will of the men of wealth. The Board of Trustees of a college often chooses their president, not on his scholastic attainments and educational policy, but on his ability to raise money for the college. This is no less true in the selection of a University president who must get the necessary funds from the State Legislature rather than from individual donors.

The president has to decide for what purposes the money raised shall be expended, and naturally the system of administration tends toward the level of those who supply the money. The spirit of our youth is ailing " partly because the spirit of our ailing industrial order has infected our colleges and universities."[2]

There are a few experiments being made in the field of education today in an effort to overcome some of these defects.

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1 - Coe, George A., What Ails Our Youth? Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1926, p. 25.

2 - Ibid, p. 31.

The Experimental College at the University of Wisconsin under the direction of Dr. Meiklejohn may be mentioned as the outstanding venture. There are no 'courses' as such, but all the work for the year centers around one main subject, and the student is left to himself to read, investigate and discuss all possible phases of this question as it relates to life today. The discussion groups are small, and the teachers have frequent conferences with each student. Students are helped in their investigations, and are encouraged to do independent thinking.

Study of Religion in Colleges:

Liberal education is fundamentally a study of contemporary life and all problems growing out of that life. There is a growing opinion that religion should be studied in college, for it is not a segment of life, but a vital part of life, and has much to contribute to the problems of every-day living.

At a conference of two hundred college presidents, deans and professors held at Princeton early in 1928 to consider the subject of "Religion Among College Men", it was agreed that courses in religion should be incorporated in the college curriculum in a more interesting and vital way, and that it should be taught on a parity with philosophy, science, history and literature.[1]

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1 - Religion Among College Men, New York Times Magazine, February 26, 1928.

While religion in colleges has had a difficult time for several generations, the reaction has now set in, in line with the opinion expressed in the Princeton conference, and more colleges and universities are offering courses in religion and Biblical literature. If a school is to give its students access to the whole field of human knowledge and culture, it must include the study of religion in its curriculum.

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CHAPTER IV

TRENDS OF STUDENT THINKING REGARDING RELIGIOUS PROVISIONS AND AGENCIES.

Chapter IV

TRENDS OF STUDENT THINKING REGARDING RELIGIOUS PROVISIONS AND AGENCIES.

We have considered the attitudes of college students toward religious beliefs, and have attempted to explain the forces in society which have been at work in influencing their beliefs. In the present chapter, we shall consider the general trend of their thought toward existing religious organizations and the provisions made by these agencies for religious development.

I Provisions made by the schools:

The colleges have made provisions for the religious development of their students in two main ways--through the agency of chapel services, and through their courses in religious education. Let us consider first the attitude of students today toward the chapel service.

A. Chapel Services:

As was pointed out in the last chapter, the majority of our colleges were founded to give definite religious training, and in the early years of the colleges, chapel was considered an absolutely essential part of the program, and attendance was compulsory.

As the years passed, however, and the students began to exert more freedom in their choice of courses and in their own government, it was inevitable that they should rebel against compulsory chapel. The services held in many

chapels were dull and drab, and the students barricaded themselves behind notebooks and newspapers. These dry and uninteresting services conducted in the name of religion, gave many students a false conception of Christianity

> "as a scheme of thought which not only denies the facts of biblical criticism and of science, but proclaims a way of life which is ascetic and goody-goody. The outcome was a misconception of religion and a distaste for supposed religion."[1]

Compulsory attendance at chapel was found by the inquirers in the Undergraduate study to be one of the livest religious issues discussed. Required attendance varied widely, in the different institutions visited, but the tendency to make chapel attendance voluntary is rapidly spreading.

At Harvard, for the last forty years, they have had a voluntary and daily and Sunday chapel. There is an average attendance of one hundred ten for the daily service. Yale had voluntary chapel services for the first time in two hundred twenty-five years in the fall of 1926. The average daily attendance there is one hundred seventy-five.[2]

It is very doubtful if compulsory chapel has religious value. Even where there are voluntary chapel services, it has ceased to be a religious service. The

1 - Tweedy, Henry H., Problem of the College Chapel, Religious Education, February 27, 1929, p. 136.
2 - Ibid, p. 141.

chief reasons given for chapel exercises are not its religious values, but tradition, social unification of the student body and administrative convenience.[1]

Such a statement as the following sums up the general student opinion about the value of chapel services:

> "Chapel is seventy-five per cent meaningless and as religion it doesn't go. The majority of undergraduates would probably vote against it. There is, however, a powerful cohesion in the college, largely due to chapel."[2]

A faculty member in a large university said:

> "Chapel is a unifying factor. The mere bringing together of so many men does something that you couldn't get otherwise. Often, however, the more religious one is the more he dislikes chapel. It is a formality and a rather dry one at that." 3

Students will crowd the chapels to listen to those men and women who understand and sympathize with them and share their spirit. Those who know how to translate the eternal truths of religion into the language of today, whether they be young or old, are sought out, and besieged with questions as to the meaning of life, and how it may be lived to the fullest.

B. Courses in Religious Education.

Any test given to college students on biblical information, or any discussion with them of the fundamentals of religion discloses their great ignorance of

1 - Undergraduates, p. 253
2 - Ibid, p. 257
3 - Ibid, p. 256

the Bible, either as literature or as a guide for right living. They know nothing of the history of religion, nor of its present meaning. There is confusion in their minds, showing a lack of fundamental education on religious and ethical issues. Students and faculty alike are realizing that the aims of religion and education are similar, and that the study of religion cannot be omitted from a college curriculum without seriously handicapping the student and society. If a college exists to give its students a view of the whole field of human knowledge and culture, the study of religion must be included in its curriculum.

Courses in religion in Denominational Schools:

In the schools established and maintained by denominations, courses in the Bible are required, and full credit is given. The criticisms of these courses would vary, depending upon the school, the teacher, and the student. From the opinions expressed in the Undergraduate study, however, the general impression is that the Bible courses are not taught by teachers who are as well trained as teachers of other subjects, and the courses are considered 'pipe courses' in too many schools. This has a tendency to give the students the impression that the study of religion is not as important as that of other subjects.

Few, if any, denominational colleges have taken religious education to be their primary function. They have thought their task to be that of giving a general education under conditions favorable to the religious life, or of keeping students religiously steady while they were getting a general education. Education and Religion have been separated, kept side by side, but not put together as Religious Education.

There are several reasons for this. The financial side of the matter has had an influence. The growth of state schools has effected the policies of the denominational college, for they are too often willing to follow the leads of the state schools. More influential than either of these reasons is the fact that the administrators of denominational colleges act on the assumption that our religion is not in the making, but was finished thousands of years ago; that religion is a matter not requiring much religious intelligence, and because of this, the main religious duty of the college is to offer to students incentives for being religious in the already conventional ways.[1]

Courses in Religion in State Schools:

There is a long history back of the present tendency to offer varied courses in religion in state supported schools.

1 - Coe, George A., What Ails Our Youth? Charles Scribner's Sons, 1926, p. 60.

History of courses in State Schools:

In the previous chapter, we briefly sketched the trend of education, and saw that because of denominationalism, it was necessary to exclude courses in religion from state schools.

The leading educators recognized the value of the study of religion, and with the notable growth in church toleration, some courses were introduced. Harvard was the first to introduce the study of the comparative history of religions, and by 1892, courses in the philosophy and history of religion were given at Harvard, Cornell, Smith College, DePauw and Indiana University.[1]

The rapid growth of the state universities during the period from 1890 to 1900, and the fact that about eighty per cent of the students were members of various churches, led the churches to realize the value of establishing courses in religion in the universities.

This period of cooperation between the churches and state universities began in 1893, when the Disciples of Christ established the Ann Arbor Bible Chair at the State University of Michigan.[2] From this time on, different denominations provided funds for the establishment of Bible Chairs in the larger universities. In many cases, the Church Boards of Education employ a University Pastor who devotes part of his time to teaching Bible

1 - Searles, Herbert Leon, The Study of Religion in State Universities, p. 34.
2 - Ibid, p. 35

courses, depending on the institution as to whether or not credit is given.

Courses in Religion now given in Universities:

Dr. Herbert L. Searles of the Institute of Character Research, University of Iowa, who made a study of religion in state universities during 1924 and 1925, has given us valuable information on this question.

He studied the forty-two tax supported universities in the United States. Of this number, nine give no courses in religion, nor do their students take accredited courses in religion in outside institutions. Thirty of the remaining thirty-three, offer courses in religion as a part of the university curriculum, supplemented by courses offered in the Schools of Religion, as at the Universities of Ohio and Illinois.

The University of Illinois offers the largest number of courses. It has fifteen courses, given by three denominational foundations. Biblical literature is the course which has been most popular, and was given in twenty-eight institutions in 1923-24. Philosophy of Religion was offered by ten different universities. The total enrollment in this year was 3,248, which does not take account of duplications. Five of the institutions studied signified their intention of developing new courses, one of dropping some of their courses, and the others were planning to maintain their present courses.

In general, the teachers have received great encouragement from students, parents, administrators, legislatures and religious organizations. The laws regarding sectarian teaching in state universities are not construed to prohibit the teaching of religion. The majority of college presidents favor the development of religious courses as part of another department of the University. The plan of an affiliated school of religion supported by denominations cooperating, the courses to be accredited by the university, is offered by others as a solution of the best method of organization.[1]

Value of courses in Religious Education:

Religion is coming to be recognized as a philosophy of life, concerned with the great human problems, a philosophy which gives meaning to all our activities. Where religious courses are taught by good teachers, there is rarely adverse criticism. The Undergraduate study revealed that the interest in good Bible courses was increasing, and the majority of students who take the courses find them most helpful.

In reply to the question "Of what value are technical courses in religious education to the undergraduate?" the following values were suggested: There is a cultural value for they give one a broader view of life. For the individual there is a great personal and spiritual

1 - Searles, Herbert L., The Study of Religion in State Universities, p. 46 f.

value for many realize for the first time the real meaning and power of religion. The needs and opportunities of the church are revealed, opening new avenues of service, and students are prepared for avocational and vocational service.[1]

II Provisions made by the church:

We have discussed the matter of church attendance in chapter two, and in this section shall consider the student criticisms of the church.

A. Student Criticisms of the church:

One of the criticisms of the church frequently made by the young people is that it is out-of-date, behind the times. They are dissatisfied with the church because of its attitude to the new knowledge of our day, its distrust of the critical, questioning, open-minded spirit. The chasm between the younger generation and the church may be bridged to a degree by a well-educated ministry, a ministry who understands youth.

Students are concerned with the present-day social problems, and criticize the church because it has seemingly not been willing to face these problems, and help in solving them.

The conventional method in the church of 'preaching at' the congregation is not in accord with the new spirit in education of working out problems together.

1 - Heisey, Paul H., Religious Education Courses in the College Curriculum, Religious Education, January 1927, p. 44.

Along with the sermon, the church must provide an opportunity for the young people to meet in congenial groups for study, recreation and service. Youth needs the help and encouragement of an older group who believe in its sincerity, power and capacity, and with the co-operation of the older generation with the younger, many problems could be solved.

The student group accuses the church of a certain lack of reality between its creeds and statements of profession and their practice, as in their bitter controversies and arguments. The young people today are interested in a religion that works, and demand of the church, men and women who live every day the religion they profess on Sunday.

Serious students are looking for something in life that will help them solve their problems. The church, for many, has seemed to offer nothing but restraint. They are impatient with the church because it gives them no intelligible answer to their question "What is religion for?" The church has too long had the idea that young people must be attracted to it. When it realizes the earnestness with which they are seeking a living religion and offers them something challenging to do, it will have no occasion to complain of the indifference of the younger generation.

A survey of twelve hundred students at

the University of Chicago regarding their attitude toward the church, showed that they appreciated the church as an institution in society. Many of the students had not come into acquaintance with modern, progressive churches, and their answers were colored by their unfortunate experiences with conservative and intolerant churches. The number of hearty endorsements of the church was surprisingly large, and a longing for greater assurance as to the realities of religion was implied in many of the responses.

Criticisms as have been mentioned previously--failure of the church to live up to ideals, the church too far behind the times, too narrow-minded, hypocritical, superficial--were also given in this survey.[1]

B. Conferences Sponsored by Church:

Progressive church leaders are recognizing the growing desire of their young people for opportunities to discuss questions with each other and with experienced leaders. Some of the denominations are making state and national conferences possible, and this has come as a direct result of the demands of the young people.

Denominational Conferences:

The National Conference of Methodist Students held at Louisville, Kentucky, April, 1924, stands

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1 - Chave, E.J., Student Attitudes Toward the Church, Monograph, 1929.

as a significant student denominational conference. It brought together more than five hundred students from one hundred twenty-two colleges and universities. The delegates represented thousands of Methodist students from the Methodist Episcopal Church and from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The meeting of the students of the two churches as one body, with the unity of spirit and purpose manifested, was a challenge to both churches to face their common problems as one united church.

The subjects of the conference were the Church, Industry, Race, War and Public Opinion, and one of the major quests was to find how students might use the agencies of the church to establish the Kingdom of God. There was evidenced an intense desire to learn and dothe will of God, a deep and eager interest in world problems, devotion to church and country, and a fine spirit of toleration.[1]

Representative of the national conferences in other denominations may be mentioned the one held by the young people of the Disciples of Christ churches in Columbus, Ohio, in 1928. The purpose of the youth convention was stated thus:

> "..to give such opportunity for inspiration, information, vision and fellowship as would introduce a large group of the youth of our brotherhood to the major and far-reaching problems of the Kingdom of God, challenging them to such thought and action as

1 - Through the Eyes of Youth, The Abingdon Press, New York, 1924, Foreword.

would help bring these problems to successful issue." [1]

Pre-convention outlines on the theme of the conference "Social Adventures with Jesus in Race, Industrial, National and Church Relations" were sent to all of the young peoples groups, so that it was not only the five hundred delegates who attended the conference who benefited by the outlines prepared. There were adult speakers to present the different topics, and an adviser in each discussion group, but in the general planning and conducting of the conference, the young people had the responsibility.

The convention was meant to be an educational and spiritual experience in every-day living, and the young people were convinced that a more serious attempt must be made to apply the standards and methods of Jesus to all the relations of life.[2]

C. Churches in College Centers:

Local Church Provisions:

Many local churches in college communities make little or no effort to meet the religious needs of college students. The Undergraduate investigation showed that while some of them are effective, the exercise of more imagination and energy in adapting themselves to the needs of students would greatly increase the value of their services.

1 - Social Adventures with Jesus, Christian Board of Publication, St.Louis, 1928, p. 5.
2 - Ibid, p. 8

Special Provisions:

In a number of the large university centers, certain denominational foundations have established special workers for the students, called University Pastors. Some are closely related to local churches, working as assistant pastors, while others work independently of the local church, but in cooperation with it. The chief points of emphasis in the work of university pastors are personal conferences with the students, especially of their own denomination, encouraging social life and activities under religious auspices, and providing voluntary classes and discussion groups. These denominational foundations were found to be best developed at Cornell, Michigan, Illinois, Kansas and Wisconsin.[1]

An evaluation of the work of the Student Pastors is difficult, for the workers vary so in their method of approach and emphasis. There was favorable and unfavorable criticism found in the Undergraduate study, but the general opinion was that the university pastors constantly studied student problems and were able to be of real help to students because of their intimate knowledge of conditions. All of the resources of modern science, physiology, psychology and sociology are made available for the student in the reverent spirit of religion by the personal workers. This is most valuable for it

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1 - Undergraduates, p. 268.

shows the student that progressive church workers are using all available knowledge in trying to deepen his spiritual life.

III Provisions Made By Other Agencies:

A. Student Christian Associations:

The Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. are the main student religious associations, and branches of these organizations are found in most of the larger colleges. The Y.W.C.A. alone has 568 student associations.

The Christian Associations are members of the World's Student Christian Federation, which was organized in 1895, and is now composed of twenty-seven national movements, including Student Christian Associations in 3113 universities, with an approximate membership of 300,000 students. This Federation is interdenominational, international and interracial.[1]

When the associations are led entirely by students, the criticism may be justly made that in most cases there is an inadequate understanding of student problems and of the deeper purpose of the movement. Some of the paid secretaries are bound by narrow religious convictions, but the majority of secretaries are well-trained and understand student thought and needs.

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1 - Federation Handbook, Association Press, 1928-29, p. 1 f.

Y.W.C.A.

At the national Y.W.C.A. convention held in San Francisco in April, 1928, the student department adopted a new purpose, which indicates the emphasis of their work. The new purpose reads:

> "We, the members of the Y.W.C.A. of _____ unite in the desire to realize full and creative life through a growing knowledge of God.
>
> We determine to have a part in making this life possible for all people.
>
> In this task we seek to understand Jesus and follow Him."[1]

Within the last few years, several associations have been discontinued, because they had ceased to be of religious value on the campus, and a few others have dropped the name "Christian" because the student leaders thought that kept girls from becoming interested in the work the organization was actually doing.

The Undergraduate investigation, however, found that the Y.W.C.A. seemed to be achieving most successfully the cooperation between youth and experience. Through their discussion groups on industry, war and race, their European Student Relief work, travelling speakers and conferences, they have stimulated interest in national and international problems as expressions of the Christian spirit. A number of students expressed the opinion that the Y.W.C.A. was far in advance of the church in their thinking and in their desire to make religion really vital in the lives of the students.

1 - The New Purpose Statement, Woman's Press, June 1928, p.381.

Y.M.C.A.

In past years, the Y.M.C.A. has been regarded as an organization which had a narrow, stereotyped formula for goodness, and students felt that a Y.M. fellow was effeminate. This attitude toward the Y.M. is changing, it appears, from the Undergraduate study, and the criticism is now being made that it is not a religious organization, but a social service agency.

Mr. Keppel writes:

> "In a desire to be practical, the Y.M. has in a degree lost the sense of the mystery of religion and of the possibility of appeal through those aesthetic influences which through the ages have been perhaps most potent of all." [1]

The first of the following statements sums up the favorable opinion toward the Y.M.C.A., while the second gives the unfavorable view. It will be noticed that even in the favorable opinion the religious value is not mentioned.

> "The Y.M. has a strong influence on the campus. It reaches the social organizations, but also the non-grouped and the foreign students, and for these last itprovides club life. It furnishes employment for students. It forwards campaigns for European and student relief, maintains missionaries in the East. It is a very stabilizing moral influence." [2]

> "The Y.M. is not doing very effective work. It has no program other than doing some practical service stunts." [3]

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1 - Keppel, Frederick P., The Undergraduate and His College, Houghton Mifflin Company, New York, 1917, p. 193.
2 - Undergraduates, p. 280.
3 - Ibic, p. 281.

B. United Work Christian Associations:

A new plan has been worked out in several of the larger universities whereby all the religious agencies on the campus cooperate, and each worker is put in charge of one phase of the united work.

In the Massachusetts State College, there is a minister as interchurch secretary who represents several denominations, and also works with the secretary of the Student Christian Associations.[1]

At the University of Pennsylvania, the organization is called a Christian Association, and while affiliated with the National Y.M.C.A. is independent in its method and program.[2]

Most favorable comment was made upon the usefulness of these united work associations in the universities where they have been established. It allows no criticism of 'denominationalism' as is sometimes made of highly developed work by each church.

IV Student Conferences:

A. Conferences sponsored by Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A.:

As an important part of their program, the Student Christian Associations have summer conferences in each of the regions. It has been the custom in the past to hold these conferences at different times. The work of

1 - Undergraduates, p. 287.
2 - Ibid, p. 289.

these two organizations on the campus, however, is being more closely unified, and as a result of this working together, a few regions are holding their summer conferences together.

The subjects that have been emphasized at these conferences, which are student planned and governed, with adult direction, follow the interest of the students, and the main topics the last few years have been Race, War, Industry, Science and Religion, and the Relations of Men and Women. These conferences usually last ten days. Outstanding leaders in each field are present, and in the discussion groups following the platform lectures, meet with the students to help them in their thinking.

As indicative of what the college girls who attend these conferences are demanding of the church today, we quote from Mrs. Kirkland who attended a Y.W.C.A. conference at Silver Bay last year:

> "A love of God greater than love of dogma, denomination or dispute; an honesty of intellect as absolute as her own; sympathy with herself as warm as hers for her elders; a bold, crusading leadership against the evils of today; and to know Jesus as man before asked to know Him as God." [1]

Those who attend these conferences find them most stimulating and challenging, but the percentage of students attending is very small, compared either with the number who are members of the organizations or of the whole student body.

1 - Kirkland, Winifred, God in the Girl's College, Century, December, 1928.

B. Interdenominational conferences:

A discussion of student conferences could not fairly be concluded without mentioning the conferences sponsored by the Student Volunteer Movement, but not limited to their members, and other interdenominational student conferences held recently.

1. Student Volunteer Convention at Indianapolis, Indiana, December, 1923.

Probably one of the most significant student conferences of this generation was the one held at Indianapolis in December, 1923. At this conference, attended by several thousand carefully chosen students from the United States and foreign countries, the baffling problems of missions today were discussed. The students and leaders here frankly expressed their opinions about the failure of our country to apply christian principles in solving the problems of race, of war and of industry. Harsh criticisms were made, and realizing the need of more information, since this conference, these problems have been the outstanding ones for further study.

2. National Interdenominational Student Conference, Evanston, Illinois, December, 1925.

In December, 1925, 900 students representing two hundred colleges and universities met in Evanston, Illinois, for a church conference, the first of its kind ever held. This was an outgrowth of the Indianapolis conference, with the interest centered in the church as the agency through

which the Christian solution of the problems discussed at the previous conference might be found.

This conference showed that the students were more conversant with the criticisms of the church than with its constructive achievements. Commissions had been appointed before the conference to make intensive studies of the various aspects of the work of the church, and these findings were of surprise to many of the students.

The conference showed that it was possible to discuss the church without being narrowly denominational. The following paragraph gives a summary of the benefits of the conference:

> "At the conclusion I think it is no exaggeration to say that the vast majority--even of the most critical--went away convinced that the church, despite its readily recognized short-comings is actually being used in terms of today's practical problems of social and international relationships and that students have a major obligation to see that its effectiveness is increased."1

3. National Student Conference at Milwaukee, December, 1926.

In 1926, a National Student Conference was held at Milwaukee attended by 2500 delegates. The theme of the conference was "What Sources Has Jesus For Life In Our World?" The subjects of a few of the platform addresses were: "Can God Be Accessible To Us and How?" by Bruce Curry,

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1 - High, Stanley, Editor, "Youth Looks At The Church, The Abingdon Press, New York, 1926, p. 9.

"International Relations and the Religion of Jesus" by Kirby Page, "Changing Conception of God and of Duty" by Robert A. Millikan, and "The Cross" by Studdert Kennedy.[1]

It was evident at this conference that the serious-minded students are interested in life as they are trying to live it in a world such as ours. They are primarily interested with problems of their own religious life, and have not yet come to think of the problems in the social order as personal religious challenges, but hold in their minds a definite separation between the social and the personal.

4. Student Volunteer Conference at Detroit, Michigan, 1927.

The Quadrennial convention of the Student Volunteer Movement, corresponding to the Indianapolis convention in 1923, was held in Detroit, Michigan, in December, 1927. The delegates included 2440 students from 593 colleges and universities in United States and Canada, together with students from twenty-three foreign countries.

From this conference came the convictions that a considerable number of students were still interested in missions, but that in order to hold the interest and command the support of forward-looking students, changes will have to be made in both the missionary policy and

1 - Religion On The Campus, Report of Milwaukee Convention, The Association Press, New York, 1927, p. 1 f.

method, freeing it from denominationalism and commercialism. Some of the leaders said that it was the most conservative group of students they had ever met, and others said it was the most liberal group. The delegates were probably a fair cross-section of that group of students in America who are interested in religion.[1]

V Evaluation of Conferences:

An evaluation of the benefits of these conferences is difficult, for the standards set are high, and many of the students who attend are not able to live out the principles set forth. They are of great educational value, for in the discussion groups following the platform addresses, the students may ask any questions and express their own thinking on the subject. For many, these conferences are of great benefit, for the importance and scope of religion in its application to personal and social problems is realized for the first time.

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1 - Students and the Future of Christian Missions, Student Volunteer Movement, New York, 1928. Foreword.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

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In this endeavor to conclude our findings regarding the general trends of student thinking about religion, we fully recognize the difficulties presented. Among the thousands of students, varied opinions are held, and we can only outline the main currents of thought, without attempting an evaluation.

There are rather well-defined groups evident on every campus, but just how many constitute each group we cannot say. If we take the opinion of two educators, expressed in the following quotations, the group interested in vital religion is small, but there is evidence that the number in this group is slowly increasing.

Dr.Ernest H.Wilkins, President of Oberlin College, said that out of a group of one thousand students, one hundred were religious minded, one hundred had dispensed with religion, and the other eight hundred were indifferent to it, feeling that they were strong and vigorous, sitting on top of the world,but in this last mentioned group, there was an undercurrent of unselfish desire to do worth-while things.[1]

Another writer states that ninety college students out of every hundred are restless,eager and full of life, taking the existing social order for granted, only wanting

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1 - Wilkins, Ernest H., Religion Among College Men, New York Times Magazine, February 26, 1928.

that which will make them happy. They do not have the capacity to think constructively for themselves and go with the crowd. There is a small group of young 'rebels' who would scrap all the present social organization and establish a new order of things governed by freedom of expression. A third group, small, too, of active idealists want to save what is best, revitalizing the church and society by understanding more fully and practicising the ideals of Jesus.[1]

We find that a great change has come about in the conception of what constitutes religion. For the college student of today, religion is a life principle which works in men and society for their improvement. The crucial religious issue of today is whether the deep realities which were expressed in the creeds and dogmas this generation is discarding can be re-embodied by them in vital terms and living movements.

Students today are not interested in the inspiration of the scriptures, and have little knowledge of the Old or the New Testament. Religion, however, is one of the most discussed subjects among students, and it is only its dead, outward symbols that are being discarded, not religion itself. Young people today want a religion that will help them better understand the purpose and meaning of life in order that they may be more

1 - Owens, Ralph W., Interpreting the Youth Movement, Religious Education, May, 1928, p. 455.

useful. The present generation is asking "what shall I do", while the older generation was more interested in the last half of the verse - "to be saved".

Many students today believe that the church has failed in its mission as a channel of divine strength and guidance. It appears as an institution which has opposed scientific progress, repressed wholesome recreation, reinforced economic oppression and worked for imperialism.

Some of those who criticize the church do so through ignorance of the work of the church, and through the failure to recognize that the churches' progress depends entirely on the progress of its members in their spiritual life. It may truly be said that a few of the members of this generation are intellectually conceited and they need to investigate conditions more fully and study the existing organizations more carefully before they discard them entirely.

If the church is to challenge the young people, it must show them Jesus as his first disciples saw Him, and let them discover Him for what He is. Each generation must do its own seeking and finding, for only as individuals discover Jesus for themselves will He change their life. President Little, formerly of Michigan, said that he believed this generation was nearer the truth about religion than ever before as they recognized the

need of going back to the fearless, courageous attitude of Christ.

It is the consensus of opinion among religious leaders and educators that the religious situation among college students today is the natural outcome of forces that have been working in American life for several generations. The reactions of youth are normal, but the conditions which prompt the reactions are not, and the older generation is responsible for these conditions. Youth is molded by the environment in which it lives during its impressionable years.

The main causes bringing about the change in the religious life of the younger generation have been: (1) The influence of home training, and of society as a whole. The materialistic age emphasizes the purely practical to the exclusion of all things spiritual. Success is measured largely by economic standing and social position. (2) The growth of the scientific spirit, which began to shake the confidence in things formerly believed, and made the students unwilling to accept anything on faith. There has been a general decrease in the belief in old authorities, either church or home. (3) The war had a passing influence,but not as far reaching as some believe for the forces had been at work long before the war. In this country, the increased prosperity following the war had a serious effect on the young people.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

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SUMMARY

There have been many changes down through the ages in the religious views of people. We find students today have a concept of religion different from that of even a generation or two ago. Then, religion was considered largely as a matter of conformity to traditional forms. Today, the religious approach is different, and the students are more concerned with the inner experience than with statements of creeds or beliefs. Religion today is dealt with in psychological terms, and while the young people may express their religious convictions in different terms than formerly, a large group of them are vitally interested in finding out more about what religion really is.

There are various types of religious awakening, the Definite Crisis, the Emotional Stimulus and the Gradual Awakening. By far the largest number of religious experiences today are of the Gradual Awakening type, in contrast to the sudden conversions that used to come from revival or camp meetings.

Judging from the results of the surveys that have recently been made of the religious beliefs of students, they do not lose their belief in God during college days. The concept of God, however, changes decidedly. The majority of students come to college with their childish ideas of an anthropomorphic God.

As they come in contact with the ideas of others, differing from their own, they are forced to reconstruct their view. Many experience doubts and difficulties for a time, but the greater number have their concepts changed for the better. The idea of a non-personal, judge-like God changes to one of a personal, father-like God.

For students today, the Bible is no longer the infallible word of God. It is considered rather as a good working code of ethics, a beautiful collection of literature, having some historical significance. Many students are questioning the meaning and value of prayer. It has been found ineffectual, and while prayer is more common than Bible reading, young people today seem to believe in it mainly because of its psychological effects on the individual.

There is much interest manifested among religious-minded students in the life and character of Jesus. Many fine courses on His life and teachings are being given in colleges. Through the study of the Gospels, students are trying to discover the real Jesus back of all the traditions that have grown up about Him.

If we would believe all the alarming newspaper and magazine articles we read, we would think no students ever went to church. In one survey, comparison of student and resident church members showed that the students attended most regularly. Worship, inspiration and the development of the spiritual life were given as

the main reasons for attending, and 'too busy', 'not interested in religion' were the reasons for non-attendance.

For the majority of serious-minded students, their religious life in college, influenced by their scientific courses, contacts with professors, and religious organizations, was deepened and enriched. If a student has brought to college as his religion a set of codes and creeds, accepted without questioning, he may lose his 'religion', but a real religious faith usually gains in strength and permanence through college years.

A consideration of the influences that have been at work for the last few generations throws much light on the question "why" the beliefs of young people today are different from those of a preceding generation.

The home training of the present younger generation may be given as one of the underlying causes. The child is greatly influenced by the atmosphere of his home, and the home conditions are responsible for many of the present attitudes. During the time the parents of the present college students were growing up, some of the long established customs and beliefs were beginning to be questioned. Large groups of the people were giving up Bible reading, church attendance, and this doubting attitude was sensed by the children.

The great shifting of the population from the country to the city in the latter part of the nineteenth century necessitated many social and economic adjustments. The numerous inventions of that period--the telegraph, cable, telephone, linotype and automobile--made communication easier and distances shorter. As the years passed, the home was no longer the center of the child's life. His home duties and responsibilities were lessened, and he sought his social life outside the home and the church.

Parental authority and responsibility greatly decreased, and in the mad pursuit of material possessions, parents neglected their children's training. The young people cannot be held entirely blamable for conditions brought about by their parents neglect.

The war also had an effect, for during the impressionable years of the present student generation, seven to seventeen, people were living under terrific strain, and the orderly habits and customs of life were forgotten. The young people today are living in the world the older generation made for them and a few of the more thoughtful ones are questioning existing conditions, trying to find their place in the world.

The growth of the scientific spirit is a fundamental cause for many conditions existing today. The doctrine of evolution , with the great archeological discoveries undermined the belief in the infallibility of the Bible. The church in many cases opposed science, antagonizing the young people toward the church. No religion

or philosophy will hold young people today which does not take account of all the facts of existence--physical, social, psychological, spiritual--unify them into a significant whole, and correlate them with life.

The changed conception of education is another influence that has helped to form the beliefs and attitudes of the present college students. Practically all of the endowed colleges were founded under religious auspices, the earliest ones being organized specifically to provide an educated ministry for the church. The early school laws showed a decidedly religious aim in education, and state funds were used by schools under church control. As the number of sects increased, however, dissatisfaction arose, finally resulting in the separation of the schools from sectarian control. As a result of the Morrill Act of 1862, defining what courses should be taught in universities, more emphasis was put on mechanical, agricultural and commercial subjects than on philosophical and cultural subjects.

The last twenty-five years have witnessed an enormous increase in the number of students attending colleges. There are now a little over half a million students in American colleges and universities. A large part of this group have had few cultural advantages at home, have rather mediocre minds, and turn to the college activities rather than to serious study. College activities occupy a large share of the student's time today.

There are only a comparatively few students who are questioning the present educational system, and its failure to train in the art of living. A few could probably be found on every campus, and in response to a demand and a recognition of need, several interesting experiments, such as the Experimental College at the University of Wisconsin, are now being carried on.

There is a growing opinion that religion should be studied in college, for it has much to contribute to the problems of every-day living. College presidents, deans and professors are agreed that religion should be incorporated in the college curriculum and taught on a parity with philosophy, science, history and literature.

There are many different organizations on the campus to care for the religious life of the students, and as to the effectiveness of these agencies, opinions vary widely. The school itself makes provision through chapel services and courses in religion. Compulsory chapel attendance is being abandoned, for the students have rebelled against it. Where chapel services are held, either voluntary or compulsory, the religious emphasis has been lost. They are continued because of tradition, unification of the student body and for administrative convenience.

Courses in religion are compulsory in denominational colleges, their value depending largely upon the

teacher. Dr. Herbert Searles of the University of Iowa recently made an extensive study of the courses in religion taught in the state universities. The period of co-operation between the churches and state universities began in 1893 when the Disciples of Christ established the Ann Arbor Bible Chair at the University of Michigan. Today, different denominations provide funds for the establishment of Bible Chairs in the larger universities.

Dr. Searles found that nine of the forty-two tax supported universities in the United States gave no courses in religion. Thirty offered courses in religion as a part of the university curriculum. The University of Illinois offers fifteen courses, the largest number. Biblical Literature and the Philosophy of Religion were found to be the most popular courses. Courses in religion have proven to be of great value to the students, and the number of courses offered is being increased in several of the schools studied.

The churches in college centers usually make special provision for the students. In the larger schools, the different denominations employ Student Pastors who work almost entirely with the students. Denominational foundations were found to be best developed at Cornell, Michigan, Illinois, Kansas and Wisconsin. The student opinion generally was favorable to these religious workers, for they keep in constant touch with student thinking and problems.

The different denominations are now sponsoring

significant youth conferences. The Methodist Student Conference at Louisville, Kentucky, in 1924, and the conference of the young people of the Disciples of Christ churches in Columbus, Ohio, in 1928, are mentioned as representative of these denominational conferences.

The Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. are doing effective religious work on some campuses, but in a few places these organizations have been discontinued. The Y.W.C.A. seems to be functioning in a helpful way, and through its discussion groups on industry, peace and race has stimulated interest in national and international problems as expressions of the Christian spirit. The Y.M.C.A. has been criticized as having lost its religious purpose in its desire to be popular, and that now it is rather a social service agency. Many students feel that the Christian Associations are far ahead of the church in their thinking and in their application of christian principles to every-day living. The Y.M. and Y.W. sponsor ten-day summer conferences in different regions of the United States. Outstanding leaders in the various fields of thought are present and meet with the students after the platform lectures in discussion groups.

There have been several significant interdenominational student conferences held within recent years. The Student Volunteer conventions at Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1923, and at Detroit, Michigan, in 1927, con-

sidered especially missionary work today. It was found that many students were still interested in missions, but that changes would have to be made in both the missionary policy and method, so that it would be freed from denominationalism and commercialism.

The interdenominational conference at Evanston in 1925 considered especially the place of the church in the forward march of civilization. The National Student Conference at Milwaukee in 1926 was built around the subject: "What Sources Has Jesus For Life In Our World?".

All of these conferences give the students opportunities to meet with student leaders of other schools, and from other nations, contact with the finest religious leaders and thinkers, and many come to realize the importance of religion in its application to personal and social problems.

It is necessary that we consider what the students are saying about their religious beliefs, but the real test of any religion is in faith and life. The students of this generation are superior to those of previous generations in moral character and in their readiness to serve. This was the opinion expressed by those who have been in close touch with students for many years, and from the investigations recently conducted.

They are more frank, impatient of control,

perhaps, but straight forward, idealistic, and ready for service when religion presents its great motives in sane and understandable terms. College students today are less inclined to talk about their faith than were those of a previous generation, and they hesitate to accept creeds, but an increasing number are restlessly seeking for the answer to Life's problems that only religion can give.

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